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# Montana SCHOOLS

January/February 1999

Newsletter of the Montana  
Office of Public Instruction  
Nancy Keenan, Superintendent  
Vol. 42, No. 2

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## And More ...

# Education day at the Capitol

## Montana's teachers and school supporters rally in Helena

The bobbing signs read "Save Our Schools," "Fund Education," and "Invest in the Dream," and most lapels in the State Capitol Building sported a bright yellow button declaring "for Kids & Public Schools!"

### Rally for education

Hundreds of Montanans traveled to Helena and crowded into the State Capitol on Saturday, February 5th, to show their support for Montana's public schools and school children.

Sponsored by the Montana Education Association, and the Montana Federation of Teachers, the Montana School Boards Association, and others, the rally was a convincing show of public support for both Montana's education system and increasing funding levels for public schools (see page 3).

"The fact that so many people gave up their weekend to drive to Helena to participate in this rally is a good indication of how important education is to them and how concerned they are," said State Superintendent Nancy Keenan.

### Rally speakers

Starting with Governor Marc Racicot and Superintendent Keenan, representatives from most of the groups with a role to play in Montana's public schools stepped up to the platform to speak to rally participants.



Montanans who support education sit on the steps in the Capitol Rotunda and lend their voices and signs to the February 6th rally.

Senate Majority Leader John Harp, R-Kalispell; Senate Minority Leader Steve Doherty, D-Great Falls; and House Speaker John Mercer, R-Polson took their turn at the microphone as did Representative Rosie Buzzas, D-Missoula, who is sponsoring HB 133, the school funding proposal supported by Montana's education community. Other speakers representing parents, school administrators, and teachers also addressed the crowd.

After the speakers finished, the true work began as rally partici-

pants disbursed to find their legislators and visit with them personally about the needs of education in their local communities.

### World class public schools

The rally turnout clearly demonstrates that Montanans recognize that we cannot continue to produce the kind of high quality educational opportunities we expect and deserve for Montana's children without long-term, sustained state financial support for Montana's public schools. ■

## State of Education Address

On Saturday morning, before the education rally, the Montana State Legislature convened in a joint session to hear from Montana's top education officials—State Superintendent Nancy Keenan and Commissioner of Higher Education Dr. Richard Crofts, PhD — and two outstanding teachers in Montana's education system—Teacher of the Year Terry Beaver, representing the K-12 schools, and MSU-Bozeman Associate Professor of Physics Dr. Greg Francis, PhD.

A few excerpts from State Superintendent Nancy Keenan's 1999 State of Education speech follow.

We have much to be proud of. Throughout the past decade, 94 percent of our students graduated from high school. Over 70 percent of Montana's high school graduates participated in the ACT or SAT exam. The results of both tests show Montana students consistently ranking among the top-scoring students in the nation. Our students consistently exceed the national average in reading, math, and science proficiency....

We have hard-working stu-

dents, dedicated teachers, and families and communities that understand the only surefire way to assure economic growth and better quality of life for their kids is through education.

Again this session, the Governor and I have forwarded a School Improvement package that continues the work on raising the bar for academic standards and provides for professional development opportunities for our teachers. At the same time, we continue to be accountable to the

people of Montana through thoughtful assessment and an education profile that provides the public with the means of measuring the quality and achievements of our schools.

I know that there are many of you in this chamber who see dollar signs every time you look at me. Well, I feel very strongly about the importance of public education and have always viewed my job as being the chief advocate for children and making sure there is enough money to get the job done.

### Absolute truths

There are some absolute truths about education funding that are borne out by the facts and plain common sense. Montanans want quality education. I know you

(Continued on page 8)

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## Message from Nancy Keenan

### The Legislature is in Town

**T**he Montana Legislature has convened. Like it or not, it is the Legislature that will play a major role in defining our public school system as we enter the next century. I am hopeful we can exit this session with a renewed commitment to public education. I was encouraged by the majority of legislative candidates from both parties who were recently elected on promises of strong state support for education.

#### Legislation affecting education

Public education will take center stage in many key legislative debates. With nearly half of the state's budget appropriated for K-12 education, it is inevitable the level and source of education funding will garner considerable public discussion.



Montana's Education Forum — which includes the Montana Education Association, Montana Federation of Teachers, Montana School Boards Association, Montana Rural Education Association, School Administrators of Montana and the Office of Public Instruction — is supporting an increase of \$36 million in BASE funding for public education. This is about \$6 million more than level the Governor is requesting.

We believe this increase is necessary to just keep the state's share of education funding even with current levels. We also believe it is

crucial for the legislature to build this money into the BASE funding without unnecessary "strings" that limit local district spending discretion.

There are already a wide variety of tax reform measures being proposed. Many of these measures would have a significant impact on the sources of education funding. We can not continue to give away millions of dollars in tax breaks and rationally expect education's funding base not to be affected. If replacement revenue sources are not established, then future legislatures will be left with draconian choices concerning state spending.

During the 1997 Legislature, there were more than 300 pieces of legislation proposed that dealt with public education. This session will continue that trend. Bills that run the gamut from proposals to improve schools to efforts to dismantle public education have already been requested.

Perennial legislation to abolish compulsory education for children, and use public funds for private schools are again being proposed. In addition, if the Montana Supreme Court does not repeal Constitutional Initiative 75, a wholesale rewriting of education law will be necessary.

Makes you wonder what one citizen can do?

#### Make sure your voice is heard

Thankfully, the Montana Legislature remains very much a "citizen Legislature." The most effective voices for schools remain the people from each legislator's district. Taking the time to explain how different pieces of legislation will affect the day-to-day job of educating Montana's children is a civic responsibility we all share.

Many Montanans came to Helena on Saturday, February 6, to attend a rally in support of public education. The rally represented an important opportunity for Montanans of all walks of life to visit with their legislators on the needs of education, their schools, and their communities.

If you didn't make it Helena for the rally, though, please make an effort to drop your legislators a note or give them a call (see page 3 for more information on how to contact your legislator.)

I hope you will participate in the public debate. Let me assure you it does make a difference.

*Nancy Keenan*

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### OPI MASS Reps

**I**n each of the nine Montana Association of School Superintendents' (MASS) regions, school administrators hold monthly meetings.

The meetings give administrators the chance to discuss issues of importance to schools, to pool information, and to share their concerns.

Each month, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) dispatches its nine "MASS Reps" to listen to the discussion and share information about activities and hot topics at OPI that might interest school administrators.

Most importantly, though, the MASS Reps' attendance allows Montana's school administrators to have regular contact with OPI and vice versa. OPI's MASS reps have helped the state office to be more aware of and responsive to the needs and concerns of Montana's schools, educators, and students. ■



OPI's 1998-99 MASS Reps (clockwise from bottom right) Seated: Ron Lukenhill, Madalyn Quinlan, James "Curly" Burns, and Rick Chiotti. Standing: Steve Meredith, Joan Anderson, Tim Harris, and Kathy Fabiano. Not pictured: June Atkins

### National Board Certification

**C**ongratulations to the Montana teachers who recently received certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards!

Those six teachers are

- ✓ Terri Lynn Dahl, who teaches at CM Russell High School in Great Falls;
- ✓ Linda Edwards, who teaches at Highland Park School in Lewistown;

- ✓ Kathleen Hayes, who teaches at Mountain View School in Great Falls;
- ✓ Karen Healey, who teaches at East Middle School in Great Falls;
- ✓ Rhonda McCarty, who also teaches at Mountain View School in Great Falls; and
- ✓ Betty Jane Streeby, who also teaches at East Middle School in Great Falls. ■

### Christa McAuliffe Fellowships

**M**ontana teachers are encouraged to apply for the Christa McAuliffe Fellowship available for this coming school year. Applications must be postmarked by April 2, 1999.

#### What is the fellowship?

Worth approximately \$27,000, this competitive fellowship will be awarded to a full-time K-12 teacher in Montana's public or private schools. The teacher may use the fellowship to fund a one-year sabbatical from the classroom to engage in study, research, or other methods of academic improvement.

#### Application process

To qualify, a teacher must have taught school for at least eight years and must agree to return to his or her current place of employment to teach for at least two years after completing the fellowship.

To apply, teachers must submit an application to the Office of Public Instruction. The application must include a proposal related to one of the four priority areas Montana has designated for school improvement. If you would like application materials, please contact Carol Gneckow at OPI (tel: 44-2417; e-mail: [cgneckow@state.mt.us](mailto:cgneckow@state.mt.us)). ■

### National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

**N**ot only is Montana the "Last Best Place," but it is also the location for the NCTM Northwestern Regional Conference. Scheduled for March 4-6, 1999, in Great Falls, it will be here before you can say, "Under the Stars in the Big Sky!"

This is your chance to expand your horizons by attending incredible sessions lead by impressive speakers including, Glenda Lappan, Gail Burrill, Mari Muri, Dan Dolan, Frank Hughes, and Don Fraser.

The conference's theme is *science and literature connections*, and there will be an equal concentration of topics relating to elementary, middle school, high school, and higher level mathematics and science.

So, check out the registration and sectional information on-line at <http://www.nctm.org>, pack your bags, and get ready for the experience of a lifetime! ■

—Satinee Lightborne, Montana Council of Teachers of Mathematics



# The 1999 Legislative Session

## Resources

### OPI's Legislative Package

Legislators are considering seven bills this session that are sponsored "By Request of the Office of Public Instruction" (OPI). The following article contains a short description and status report on each of these bills.

#### HB 90: Allowing Districts to Estimate Certain Non-Levy Revenues

Representative Toni Hagener (D-Havre) is carrying this proposal, which would allow school districts to estimate general fund revenues from tuition receipts and corporate license taxes paid by financial institutions. If passed, districts will be able to use a current-year estimate based on the July payment of corporate license taxes and tuition agreements from the prior year.

HB 90 has passed the House and been referred to the Senate Education Committee.

#### HB 103: Voting Provisions

Sponsored by Representative Ray Peck (D-Havre), this measure

would eliminate the requirement that districts vote on general fund budget authority. A district must still adopt a budget that meets its BASE budget but does not exceed its maximum budget as defined in statute. Within the "window of equalization," school trustees may adopt a budget equal to the district's prior-year budget or the prior-year budget per student, whichever is greater. Trustees will be required to hold a tax election on any tax increases necessary to fund the general fund budget.

This bill was amended, has passed the House, and been referred to the Senate Education Committee.

#### HB 133: Increase K-12 BASE aid

Representative Rosie Buzzas is sponsoring this proposal to increase the per-student entitlements to schools by 4 percent each year for elementary programs and 2 percent for high school programs. At the elementary level,

these increases translate into \$3,546 per student in FY2000 and \$3,688 in FY2001. The high school rates are set at \$4,868 for FY2000 and \$4,966 for FY2001. The proposal would also increase the basic entitlement for elementary programs to \$21,500 in FY2000 and \$25,000 in FY2001. The basic entitlement for high school programs is increased to \$204,000 in FY2000 and \$208,080 in FY2001.

The Governor's education funding proposal is found in SB 100, which is being sponsored by Senator John Harp (R-Kalispell). SB 100 contains \$6.2 million less for Montana education than HB 133.

#### HB 145: Professional Stipends for National Board Certification

The introduced version of HB 145, sponsored by Representative Gay Ann Masolo (R-Townsend), provided annual stipends of \$3,000 for Montana public school teachers who receive certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. As amended, the proposal provides a one-time stipend of \$5,000 for those teachers. Recommended by the Montana Commission on Teaching, HB 145 was jointly requested by OPI and the Governor's office.

The bill has passed the House Education Committee and been referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

#### SB 31: Distribution of Direct State Aid

Senator Barry "Spook" Stang (D-St. Regis) is carrying this proposal, which moves the date of the final distribution of direct state aid to school districts from July 15 to the end of June. The Senate has approved this bill and transmitted it to the House.

#### SB 69: School Finance Clean-up

Sponsored by Senator Stang, this bill would eliminate inconsistencies in reporting requirements, dates, and duties within Title 20. The Senate has approved this bill and transmitted it to the House.

#### SB 104: Lower Threshold for State Aid for Enrollment Increases

Under current law, districts are eligible for increased state aid if the district experiences an unusual enrollment increase of at least six percent. Under this proposal, sponsored by Senator Tom Beck, a district would be eligible for additional state aid for any enrollment increase in excess of four percent.

This bill has been tabled in Senate Education. ■

### OPI's Capitol office

During the 1999 legislative session, OPI will have a temporary office at the Capitol in room 106. OPI staff members will use the office as home-base to meet with legislators and track legislation affecting education.

The Capitol office is also intended as a resource for the education community. Educators and students who come to Helena to speak with their legislators, testify on bills, or watch legislative proceedings are welcome to stop by. If you need last minute information about a specific piece of legislation or cannot find the answer to your question about the legislature on the Legislature's Web site, contact the OPI Capitol office (tel: 444-7095; fax: 444-7093).

METNET will also carry legislative information (see page 5).

### Legislative information

If you can access the Internet, you can also access information about the 1999 Legislature. The Montana Legislature's official Web site is at <<http://www.mt.gov/leg/branch/branch.htm>>. From that Web site you can use LAWS (see below), find committee assignments and hearing schedules, locate a legislator's home district, download the House and Senate journals, read the Montana Constitution, and search current Montana statute — just to mention a few of the possibilities.

### Communication with legislators

If you are unable to make the trip to Helena, you can still reach your legislators in the following ways.

- Call 444-4800 and leave a message for a legislator. The TDD (Telephone Devis for the Deaf) number is 800-832-0283.
- Fax a message to 900-225-1600, but be aware that this is a toll call and costs 45 cents a minute.
- Send an e-mail message to your legislator at [house@state.mt.us](mailto:house@state.mt.us) or [senate@state.mt.us](mailto:senate@state.mt.us). Include the legislator's name in the subject line. Bulk messages are discouraged.

### Bill tracking system

The Legislative Council has created a bill tracking system on the Internet called the Legislative Automated Workflow System or LAWS.

Members of the public can look up the status of individual bills and access bill text. The tracking system has a search function that allows the user to find bills of interest by subject, sponsor, bill number or other criteria. Information on individual legislators is also online. LAWS can be accessed through a link on the Montana Legislature Web site. ■

**The most effective voices for schools remain the people from each legislator's individual district. Taking the time to explain how different pieces of legislation will affect the day-to-day job of educating Montana's children is a civic responsibility we all share.**

—Nancy Keenan, State Superintendent

### Legislative committees to watch

The House and Senate Education committees hear the majority of bills that pertain to Montana's education system. For our reader's convenience, we have listed the committees' meeting rooms, times, and members.

#### The House Education Committee meets in Room 312-1 on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 3 p.m.

Members: Gay Ann Masolo, Chair—R-Townsend; Bob Lawson, Vice Chair—R-Whitefish; Linda McCulloch, Vice Chair—D-Missoula; Joan Andersen—R-Fromberg; Tom Facey—D-Missoula; Dan Fuchs—R-Billings; Kathleen Galvin-Halcro—D-Great Falls; Kim Gillan—D-Billings; John Holden—R-Valier; Sam Kitzenberg—R-Glasgow; Monica Lindeen—D-Huntley; Jeff Mangan—D-Great Falls; Joe McKenney—R-Great Falls; Mark Noennig—R-Billings; Sam Rose—R-Choteau; Allan Walters—R-Hamilton; Diana Wyatt—D-Great Falls

#### The Senate Education & Cultural Resources Committee meets in Room 402 on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 1 p.m.

Members: Daryl Toews, Chair—R-Lustre; Bill Glaser, Vice Chair—R-Huntley; John Hertel—R-Moore; Mike Sprague—R-Billings; Alvin Ellis—R-Red Lodge; Bob Keenan—R-Bigfork; Jack Wells—R-Bozeman; Debbie Shea—D-Butte; Barry "Spook" Stang—D-St. Regis; Mignon Waterman—D-Helena; Jon Ellingson—D-Missoula

Other committees that will handle bills that affect Montana's children, teachers, and schools are Senate Finance & Claims, the House Appropriations, and House and Senate Judiciary committees. The committee hearing schedules and membership lists are posted on the Montana Legislature Web site (see the "Resources" sidebar to the right.) ■



# Native American Languages in the Schools

**H**istorically, Montana has 11 Native American Languages (NAL) indigenous to its territory:

Assiniboine, Crow, Blackfeet, Chippewa, Cree, Gros Ventre, Kootenai, Pend d'Oreille, Northern Cheyenne, Salish, and Sioux.

While some language research predicts that these languages could disappear by 2020, tribes and many organizations are working toward their revitalization. Linguists have assisted in creating writing systems, grammars, and dictionaries. Each tribe works toward having young people learn the language through classes, community gatherings, and interaction with elders, along with other innovative efforts. The development of private immersion schools also holds great promise for very young children to learn their language of heritage.

These efforts will continue.

## Students, learning, and language

The 1998 Montana Public School Enrollment Data submitted to the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) show that Montana's K-12 schools served 16,245 children identified as Native American last year; this amounts to a little over 10 percent of all public school students.

Although the public school system cannot save Native American Languages (NAL), the school has a role to play in helping to preserve and promote language use.

The Montana Association of Bilingual Education philosophy states, "We believe that language is the most fundamental factor in education and that learning in and about more than one language results in significant cognitive and affective benefits. Children whose lives are impacted by languages other than English should be provided an educational program that assures them those benefits."

This philosophy supports second language education, English as a Second Language, and NAL education.

## Important development phase

During the school years, children form their ideas and attitudes about self-worth. What the school acknowledges about the child's culture becomes internalized. This is extremely important for Native American students; a NAL class should have equal status in the school to other second language classes.

In addition, schools have a responsibility to welcome the families of its students so that local control truly is control by all of the people in a district. Ideally, schools will be places where a child can bring the elders of their family and have pride that the schools acknowledge the best in "both worlds," the contemporary and the traditional.

In education and psychology, we talk about culture as if it can

*This is part one of a three-part series on Native American Language and the schools. The second section will present the Class Seven Specialist Certificate, and the third will discuss the future of Native American Language education in Montana.*

be easily defined. Culture tells us how to behave, what is good, what is not. The dichotomy between nature and nurture is based on culture.

The language of our society in the United States at the beginning of 1999 defines these things for our young people. When two cultures come together that do not have a shared language, differences between cultures are carried by the languages of each culture. Native American children in Montana are aware of differences between themselves and some of their classmates. We can pretend that this awareness doesn't exist or we can use the academic environment to understand the differences and the similarities.

## The connection between public school and NAL

The linkage between school and NAL has a long history. Educational thought during the last 130 years, from the boarding schools to present day, has undergone several major transformations.

The assimilation theories popular during the 1800-1900s both established education as a means of change for indigenous peoples and forbade use of their languages in education. During this time, children were taken from their families and housed in boarding schools, frequently far from their homes. The breakdown of the traditional extended family system dramatically impacted language use in the home. Early in the 1900s few Native American children were educated in the public school system. Most attended schools sponsored by the Bureau of Indian Affairs or churches.

The history of boarding schools is too complex a topic for this article, but high dropout rates, poor parenting skills, and low academic achievement were part of the legacy of the experience. During the time since World War II, the number of Native American students in public school continues to increase, but still only two to three generations of Native Americans have been educated in the public schools.

## Language acquisition

Parents are only able to pass on the knowledge and skills which they have received. Language decline in Montana's Native American communities means too few parents can pass their indigenous language on to their children. We have a situation where the best speakers of NAL are likely to be older and have less formal education than their counterparts who do not speak their language. According to a

statistic cited during presentations to create language programs, there were only seven elders left in 1995 who spoke the Gros Ventre language.

The lack of college-educated Native Americans fluent in their heritage language has limited the public schools' involvement in NAL education. Frequently, if such people are available, the tribe employs them to help in language programming and tribal college classes. This leaves a severe shortage of teachers of NAL for public schools at the time they are most needed. Only the Crow language has fluent speakers with teaching credentials at both elementary and high school levels. But, even those speakers were not certified to teach language.

## Class Seven Specialist certification

This difficulty was addressed at a Montana Board of Public Education (MBPE) meeting in January 1995. There it was suggested that the Board create a separate classification for language teachers. At their meetings, members of the Montana Advisory Council on Indian Education (MACIE), Montana Indian Education Association (MIEA), Montana Coalition of American Indian Higher Education (MCAIHE), and Montana Association of Bilingual

Education (MABE) discussed options for certifying language and culture teachers. These options included:

- extending the Montana emergency authorization from one to three years,
- a NAL option,
- a Montana permissive endorsement category, and
- creating a separate class of certification.

At their May 1995 meeting, MBPE members approved the Montana Class Seven American Indian Language and Culture Specialist certification.

This certification class received support from all seven tribes and all 11 language groups. It has also been supported by the Montana Education Association, the MBPE, and OPI. Since its creation, the Class Seven Specialist has made it possible to find teachers for a range of programs meeting the needs of all 11 NAL. As of Fall 1998, 57 Class Seven Specialists have been awarded certification. Some of them are currently employed in public schools. ■

— Joyce Silverthorne

*Editor's Note: Silverthorne is a member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe who has been involved in NAL education since 1991 and is pursuing a doctoral degree at Gonzaga University in Education Leadership with an emphasis on language revitalization. She is a student of the Salish language.*

## Principal and school counseling intern programs available to Montana teachers

**M**ontana teachers who want to become a principal or K-12 school counselor might be interested in participating in one of the following internship programs.

### Principal Internships

This program allows an individual to assume the duties of principal while completing a master's program in school administration. Although administrative interns may function as administrators prior to meeting all the requirements for principal endorsement, they must meet the college criteria for entrance into graduate school and the administrative program, and complete the initial coursework required in that field.

The participating school district selects a teacher who has the potential to become a principal but has not completed a program for the master's degree in school administration. The local trustees agree to employ the person as principal (at least half-time) while the intern completes a planned and supervised program in school

administration. The school district, intern and university agree upon supervisory costs and support for the individual's professional development. At MSU-Bozeman, contact Dr. Keith Chambers; at the UM-Missoula, contact Dr. Ernest Jean.

### Counseling Internships

The counseling internship program operates essentially the same as that for principals. Programs exist at MSU-Northern (Dr. Korinne Tande, coordinator), MSU-Bozeman (Dr. Mark Nelson), the UM-Missoula (Dr. Rita Sommers-Flanagan or Dr. Cathy Jenni), and MSU-Billings (Dr. James Nowlin, or Dr. Daniel Yazak).

### Learning more

Interested teachers or district officials should contact program coordinators on the campus of their choice. Marilyn Roberts (444-3150) or Don Freshour (444-2577) at OPI can provide more information. Candidates for the 1999-2000 school year should be identified by July 1, 1999. ■



# Four Montana schools pass muster for multi-year accreditation

## MISTA schools first in the Northwest to achieve NASC endorsement

At the annual meeting of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NASC), Colstrip High School, Hardin Elementary, Havre High School, and Helena Capital High School received multi-year accreditation.

The accreditation was awarded to these schools for completing the new Performance-Based Accreditation process that is mandatory for all NASC schools and an alternative route to accreditation for Montana schools.

### First in the region

These four schools were the first to achieve this accomplishment in

not only the Northwest, but in Montana's seven-state area.

### MISTA members

These four schools were charter members of the Montana Improving Schools Through Accreditation (MISTA) consortium, and as such, have been supported by a cooperative effort of the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), the State Northwest Committee and the Northwest Regional Educational Lab. ■

## A congratulatory note and thank you

I want to extend my personal congratulations to Hardin Elementary and Capital, Havre, and Colstrip High Schools for becoming the first four schools in the seven northwestern states to receive multi-year performance-based accreditation from the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

These schools were part of a pilot project supported by the Board of Public Education, the Office of Public Instruction, and the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NASC). They received lengthy and arduous training from representatives from NASC, the Northwest Regional Educational Lab, and OPI. They underwent rigorous self-evaluations and were put under the microscope by colleagues from other Montana schools. These four schools presented their programs to the commissioners of the NASC and received high accolades that brought honor to themselves and Montana.

They have established a new standard for those Montana schools who choose to be accredited through a performance-based process. Due to their efforts, Montanans have yet another reason to be proud of the education their children receive.

I would also like to thank former Deputy Superintendent Jack Capps, Roundup School District Superintendent Jay Erdie, and Jan Clinard from my office for their vision and hard work. Without them and countless others, these schools would not have had the opportunity to travel down this new and exciting road.

Nancy Keanan

creased.

### Declines in elementary numbers

The decrease was again driven by declines in elementary student enrollment. Elementary enrollment decreased by 2,455 students, or 2.2 percent. This decline was slightly offset by an increase of 100 high school students.

The 12 Montana counties shown in the table at the left experienced the most significant decreases in student population. They accounted for more than half, 56 percent, of the enrollment decreases in the state.

### Projections indicate continuing trend

The decline in the current year comes on the heels of an enrollment decrease of 2,292 students from last year. Public school enrollment in Montana peaked at 165,507 in school year 1995-96.

The Office of Public Instruction projects that enrollments will continue to decline through the year 2003. These trends are a result of two major factors. First, Montana currently has one of the oldest average age populations in the country. This decreases the number of households with school-age children. Second, Montana has been experiencing a decrease in net migration of families with school-age children in the later part of the 1990s. ■

## School enrollment declines

Montana public school enrollment declined by 2,355 students or 1.5 percent from last year's count.

The 1998 fall enrollment was about 160,000 students, down from 162,164 students for the

1997-98 school year. This marked the third year in a row public school enrollment de-

### Counties with the most significant enrollment changes

	Elementary Enrollment	High School Enrollment	Total Enrollment
Missoula	-290	38	-252
Silver Bow	-129	-35	-164
Yellowstone	-208	82	-126
Dawson	-77	-34	-111
Glacier	-73	-18	-91
Valley	-53	-35	-88
Cascade	-145	60	-85
Lincoln	-45	-38	-83
Ravalli	-142	60	-82
Deer Lodge	-73	-8	-81
Lake	-89	8	-81
Richland	-62	-18	-80
Subtotal:	-1386	62	-1324

## The Montana Heritage Project sponsors Institute for Community-Centered Learning

The Montana Heritage Project will hold its fifth annual summer institute in Great Falls on June 22-23, 1999. The institute is open to all teachers interested in community-centered teaching. Community-centered teaching views the local community both as the subject of serious inquiry and as an important teaching resource.

### Past projects in the schools

In the past, students have completed oral history projects for local museums, collected historical photographs from community members for local archives, conducted field research for the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and assisted with an archeological study for the Bureau of Land Management. Work can be undertaken in any academic discipline, though most projects have been completed in English and history classes.

### Summer institute

A major emphasis of the Summer Institute is to include teachers

in the cultural conversations that shape today's Montana. At the institute, teachers have a chance to meet with important writers and historians to discuss the vital issues that people in the American West face today — and the way rural communities manifest these issues.

At the summer institute, experienced project teachers will offer a series of workshops on a variety of heritage projects that are underway in Montana communities. Sessions will also be offered by representatives from the Heritage Project's sponsors, which include the Library of Congress, the Montana Historical Society, the Montana Committee for the Humanities, the Montana Arts Council, and the OPI. The project is funded by an ongoing grant from the Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation.

### Application information

Send requests for Summer Institute registration forms to the Montana Heritage Project, P.O. Box 672, St. Ignatius, MT 59865



Photo: Michael Umphries

Teachers at last summer's Next Generation Institute practice their documentation skills while interviewing Charlie Russell (aka Boh Malyevac). Each institute features a balance of hands-on skills and talks by writers, historians, and artists who contribute to the cultural conversations that are shaping the American West today.

(e-mail: [umphrey@edheritage.org](mailto:umphrey@edheritage.org)).

In addition, the Heritage Project will make grants of up to \$3,000 for teachers to conduct community-centered teaching projects in Montana's rural high school classrooms. Grant applications are due March 1, 1999.

For more information, visit the web site at [www.edheritage.org](http://www.edheritage.org) or request a copy of the Heritage Project's magazine, *The Next Generation*. ■

—Michael Umphries, Montana Heritage Project



### METNET gets an upgrade

METNET has undergone some renovations in the last few months. Our client software has been upgraded and, while the FirstClass® Intranet Client has all of the conferencing, file transfer, and e-mail functions of previous versions, it also has the following:

- ✓ Document editing enhancements
- ✓ New spell checking features
- ✓ The ability to create links to the World Wide Web
- ✓ Support for message signatures
- ✓ A preferences system that supports custom views
- ✓ An internal viewer for JPEG, GIF and BMP files
- ✓ Auto forward and reply
- ✓ A menu bar that can be customized
- ✓ A summarize function for selected messages
- ✓ The ability to allow users to create personal Web pages
- ✓ Mail Filtering

#### Free Client Software

The new software can be downloaded from either the NEWS conference on METNET or from our Internet location at <http://www.metnet.state.mt.us>.

[metnet.state.mt.us](http://www.metnet.state.mt.us) by selecting the Intranet Clients navigation button on the left side of the Web page.

We can no longer support FirstClass® Version 2.7 or older, so please upgrade if you have an older client. To learn what version you're using, first log on to METNET.

- Windows users select *Help* from the top menu and you'll see *About FirstClass® Client* and your version number.
- Macintosh users select the Apple Menu then *About FirstClass® Client*.



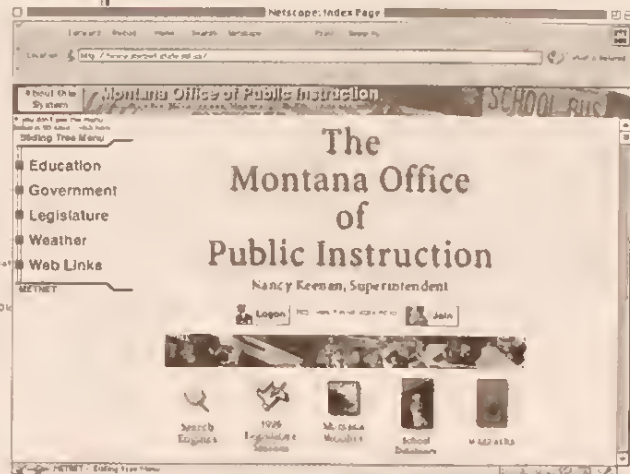
This is the current METNET desktop. If your desktop doesn't look similar to this, you're using an old client!

### METNET on the Web

<http://www.metnet.state.mt.us>

You can now access METNET through the Internet. At this Web site, registered users can log on, and new users can register. Additionally, any information posted on METNET is automatically available on the World Wide Web!

At first glance, METNET on the Web may look different than the METNET BBS, but you will find all the same conferences and news areas, as well as the latest Legislative updates and weather. You can browse all the public conference areas on METNET without logging in.



This is METNET's current Home page on the Web. From this Web site you can log on or join METNET, use a search engine, check the weather, or other news.

### What equipment do you need to use METNET?

You can connect to METNET 24 hours a day through local or toll-free telephone lines with any Windows-based (Windows 3.1 or higher) or Macintosh computer, a modem (14400 or faster for best results), and the free METNET FirstClass® Intranet Client software. You can also reach METNET on the Internet at <http://www.metnet.state.mt.us>, using either the METNET software or a Web browser.

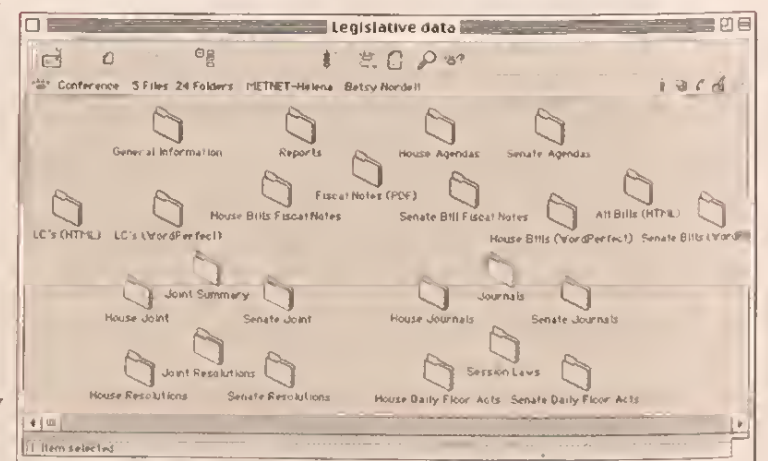
METNET can also be accessed through a POP3 client such as Outlook Express, Eudora, Netscape Mail, or Claris E-mailer (POP3 address – [mail.metnet.state.mt.us](mailto:mail.metnet.state.mt.us)). If you're using a modem, you may want to install the free METNET software on your computer even though you can also use Telex or other communications software. ■

#### Technically speaking

METNET provides support for SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol), POP3 (Post Office Protocol Version 3), HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol).

### Legislative Information

METNET is again carrying legislative information, which is available the minute it is posted by the Montana Legislative Services Division. To view or download, open the *Legislative Data* icon on the bottom of the METNET desktop. Or, if you are using the METNET Web site, select *Legislature* from the navigation buttons on the left side of the screen.

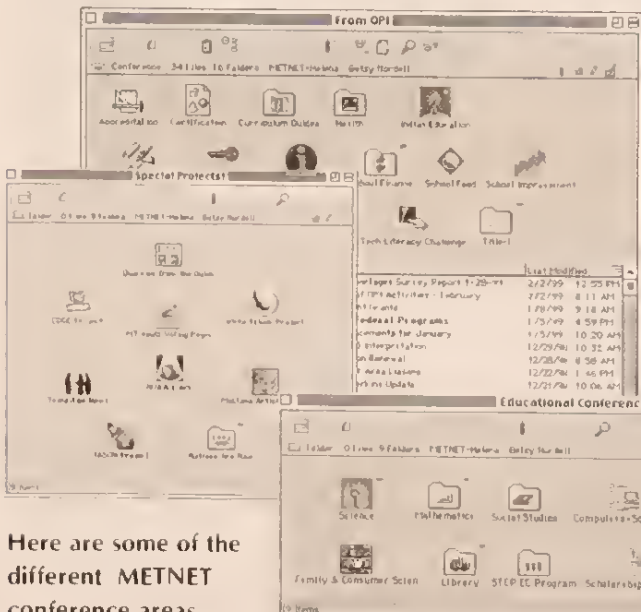


Inside METNET's *Legislative Data* window, users can find up-to-date information on the 1999 Montana State Legislature.

### METNET Conferences

METNET contains a large collection of interest areas called conferences. Here are a few examples:

- ✓ *Educational Conferences:* This area includes curriculum areas, as well as scholarship information.
- ✓ *From OPI:* Here METNET users can find school budget information, curriculum and accreditation guides, information about OPI grants and workshops.



Here are some of the different METNET conference areas.

- ✓ *Education Associations:* In this area, associations such as SAM, MASS, MEA, and MASBO post messages and notices for their memberships. Educational organizations or groups can also design their own Web pages and link them to METNET.

- ✓ *Special Projects:* A variety of educational projects that could interest teachers and students are posted here. Suggestions of possible projects for this area are welcome. The current projects include:

— *NOAA's Ark:* METNET users can follow Richard Jones' two-month journey at sea. Jones, a physics teacher at Billings Senior High, took part in the National Oceanic Atmospheric Association's (NOAA) Teacher at Sea Program and posted messages and photographs during his voyage.

— *The Artist's Gallery:* this collection features the work of many Montana artists, including the Yellowstone Art Gallery.

— *Quarries from the Gulch:* this area includes excerpts from the book of the same name, written by six Helena historians, who research events, people, and places that have made Helena what it is today. ■



# communications *NET*work

r 1999

col), and finger protocols (Internet standard for finding users), as well as FTP (File Transfer Protocol) for downloading files. The SMTP and POP3 address is <mail.metnet.state.mt.us>.

## Search Engines and METNET

METNET's Web site uses the latest technologies, including search engines that allow users to create searches using both common English questions and complex Boolean searches. Some of the possible searches include:

- ✓ **PDF Search:** Search through OPI's Adobe Acrobat Documents for official curriculum guides, financial information, registration forms, technology guides, etc.
- ✓ **Legislative Search:** Search the 1999 Montana Legislative database for the latest bill information. Use the interactive search agent, Casper, to notify you of changes via e-mail.
- ✓ **Directory Search:** Search for registered METNET users.
- ✓ **Global Search:** Search the interactive Web server in a variety of ways.
- ✓ **METNET** is also linked to *Encarta® Online Schoolhouse*, a resource for educators; *Explore*, an area for discovery; and the *Discovery Channel School*, which feature hundreds of pages of information, lesson plans, and classroom activities for many topics commonly taught in the K-12 curriculum. ■

## Which is best for you?

### FirstClass® Software or the METNET Web site

Since METNET now comes in two flavors—FirstClass® Client or World Wide Web—users must decide which connection best suits their tastes and needs. To help, the basic differences are summarized below.

#### METNET using FirstClass® Software

- Access: Modem or TCP (Internet)
- Speed: Users can quickly move from screen to screen and conference to conference.
- Interface: It is user-friendly with clear and concise menus and easy movement between one level to the next. Features like message history and the ability to send and unsend messages increase user satisfaction.
- Software: FirstClass® Client
- Search Engines: Two are provided: one for the METNET-user directory and one for files and documents.

#### METNET WEB Site

- Access: Internet
- Speed: The Web site is slower; users must wait for each page to load as they switch from screen to screen.
- Interface: It is user-friendly but has limited menus. Users can do basic tasks such as reading and responding to messages as well as downloading and uploading files
- Software: Web browser of choice
- Search Engines: Five are provided: users can search a wide variety of documents and formats, including information located on other Internet sites.

## • Special features for teachers

Teachers, as well as state and local government employees, have some additional privileges on METNET. They can send and receive private METNET mail and Internet e-mail, and they also have access to the following education resources:

- ✓ cost-saving educational software price lists;
- ✓ the Global Village (a community-to-community educative exchange through shared public domain areas); and
- ✓ the entire library of MicroSoft Office 97 Learning Modules from DDC Publishing.

To receive these special features, however, the METNET staff needs to know you're eligible. If you're a certified educator, include your folio number when you register or, if you're already registered, fill out the *Request for E-mail* form in the *Ask The Administrator* Conference. Government employees should include their agency name and phone number in their registration.

#### Sending E-mail messages

The first time you log on to METNET, our Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) will automatically open. After reading and closing the AUP, you'll see several icons on what is referred to as your METNET desktop; there are icons labeled *News*, *Montana Education*, *MT State Government* and *Help*.

There is also an icon labeled *MailBox*, which will contain all your mail. Save any messages you want to keep to your own hard drive; private e-mail messages are automatically deleted from your mailbox after 30 days.

To compose a new message, select *Message -> New Message* from the top menu bar. An empty message form will be created and displayed in a new window. The window has two panels; the upper panel shows the envelope information, while the lower panel contains the message contents. You can scroll either of these panels independently.

#### Addressing the Message

To address your message to another METNET user, click in the *To:* line, type in the name of your intended recipient and hit Return. You can type in just the first or last name or even just a few characters if you are unsure of the name—the system will search for the name in the METNET-user directory and fill in the full name for you. When multiple matches are found (for example, if you typed "Smith," a window opens showing all the users named "Smith") you can

select the desired name from the list by double clicking on the correct name. Remember to always hit the *Return* or *Enter* key when you are done typing in the *To:* field — this tells the system to begin searching for the matching registered user.

If you're sending to an Internet address, type in the complete Internet address and hit *Return*. The server will not search for a match in the METNET directory.

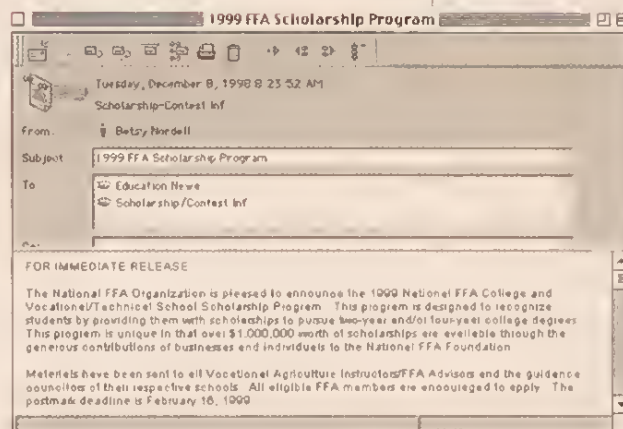
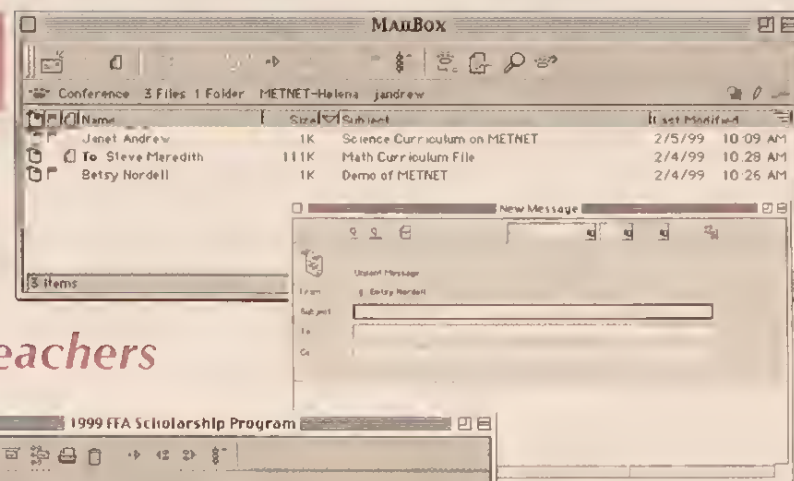
#### Completing and Sending

To fill in the text of your message, click in the lower panel and begin typing. The METNET FirstClass® Intranet Client acts like a word processor, allowing you to edit and spell check messages. When you are finished, choose *Send* from the message menu. A postmark will appear in the upper left-hand corner of your message to indicate that your message has been sent.

#### Setting User Preferences

Certified teachers and government employees can also set their own METNET preferences. To view or change the Preferences options, select *Edit -> Preferences*. This window allows users to modify many METNET settings, including document editing and viewing, mailbox, mail rules, and signature options.

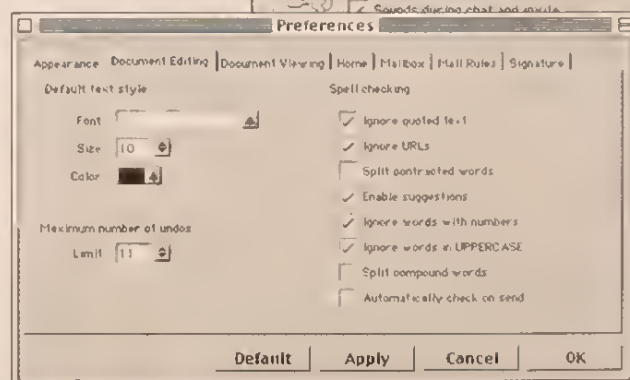
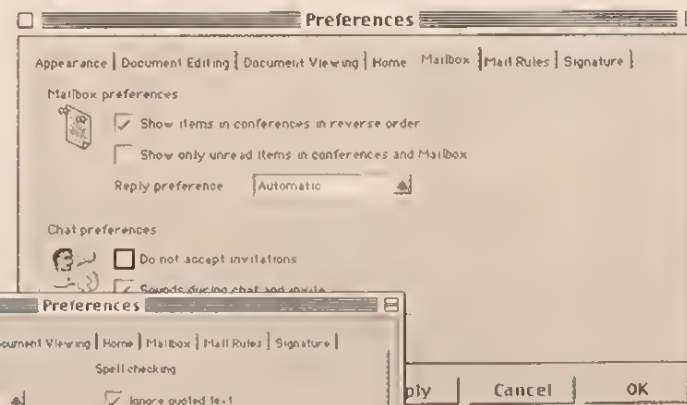
You can also select options to let FirstClass know how to handle junk mail, automatically forward messages to another user or conference, establish spell checking preferences, set the default download folder and select private chat options. ■



Teachers receive a METNET mailbox and messaging privileges. Above, you can see the inside of a METNET-users mailbox, a blank message, and, to the left, a fully addressed message, which is ready to send.



Above you can see the results of a search in the METNET-user directory when "Smith" is entered in the *To:* line.



Above and to the left are two of METNET's preference windows. By choosing among the options, METNET users can personalize their electronic work space.



## Educators and stakeholders work to improve Montana's schools

Many of Montana's school staff members are currently learning to implement school improvement processes that rely on data-driven decision making and involve all stakeholders (parents, community members, students, and teachers).

The research on reform shows that involving teachers in decisions is a key factor in creating sustainable reform efforts. Research also points to the importance of using data to learn about the needs of a school and making decisions based on those needs.

### Different Montana processes

The school improvement processes that are part of professional development in Montana include the following:

- ✓ Performance-Based Accreditation (PBA) and the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NASC) School Improvement Process (SIP): taught through MISTA (Montana Improving Schools Through Accreditation);
- ✓ Onward to Excellence II: training offered by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL);

✓ School Improvement Process based on Effective Schools Research: training provided by Title I; and

✓ Processes selected by individual curriculum consortia or schools, such as the Clover Park Comprehensive School Improvement Planning Process overview offered by the Mission Valley Curriculum Consortium and training in High Performance Teams offered by Paragon for the Bigfork Schools.

Though the emphases may vary, these processes are similar. All require schools to assess their needs, set a direction, identify barriers and study possible solutions, develop and implement a plan of improvement, and continue to assess their progress. The table at left compares these steps, which differ only in terminology and the way they are divided. ■

— Jan Clinard, OPI, Curriculum and Assessment Specialist

MISTA				TITLE I		OTHER
NASC	NSSE	PBA	OTE II	Effective Schools	Schoolwide Planning (DOE)	Accelerated Schools
Orient	Intent	Get Started	Establish Teams	Prepare & Train	Establish Team	
Profile	Profile	Conduct Initial Assessment, Develop Profile, Appoint Facilitator	Collect Demographics	Conduct Needs Assessment, Create Profile	Take Stock	
Write Mission	Write Mission	Set Direction	Write Mission	Clarify Vision	Develop Shared Vision	
Identify Desired Learner Results	Identify Desired Learner Results	Set Mission, Student Learning Goals, Values and Beliefs, District Priorities, School Improvement Goals	Determine Essential Learnings	Clarify Needs & Set Goals	Identify Priority Challenge Areas	
Analyze Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness	Analyze Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness	Learn from Experience & Research Information	Develop Profile (Student Outcomes & Organizational Dimensions)	Identify Research Based Strategies & Solutions	Begin Inquiry Process	
Write School Improvement Plan	Develop and Implement School Improvement Plan	Plan Action	Develop Plan	Set Schoolwide Program Goals	Find and Implement Solutions	
		Take Action	Implement Plan	Write Schoolwide Plan		
		Implement Strategies, Provide Staff Development, Create Support		Implement Plan		
Monitor		Maintain Momentum	Monitor	Monitor	Assess Results	
		Profile, Assess, Check, Monitor, Renew	Evaluate	Evaluate		
			Renew	Revise		
Conduct Onsite Peer Review	Conduct Onsite Peer Review					

NASC (Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges)  
PBA (Performance-Based Accreditation)

NSSE (National Study of School Evaluation)  
OTE (Onward to Excellence)

## State of Education, cont.

have heard from many of them. They are your neighbors, colleagues, constituents, and friends. They sit on your school boards, have children and grandchildren attending your local schools, and they are your teachers. Listen carefully to them.

### Declining enrollment

Some things in life we know to be absolutely true. The earth rotates around the sun, water runs downhill, and our public school enrollment is declining. When enrollments decline, the general fund budget of the district also declines.... Without a doubt, our public school system has reached critical mass in terms of the number of school districts that are under duress at the current level of funding....

There seems to be confusion around the fact that if there are fewer students, then schools should need less money. An absolute truth is that costs do not drop in direct proportion to

enrollment decline... the teachers still need to be paid, the building still needs to be heated, the lights must still be turned on, and the buses must continue to run. If all students that are leaving would do so from one grade or just one school it would make it a lot simpler, but students that leave are across the school system, making it very difficult to reduce those fixed costs....

### Declining state share of school funding share and taxes

It is an absolute truth that the state share of funding for schools has declined steadily over the past eight years.... When the state share declines, district taxpayers pick up the tab...through their property tax increases. These tax increases require voter approval and about 90 percent of school levies have passed, demonstrating the desire and willingness of Montanans to preserve the quality of their schools. Adequately funding schools and the state level translates into reducing local property taxes. It is that simple....

### The uncomplicated truth

The truth is not complicated. I am here with the same truthful message. Your schools desper-

ately need \$36 million in their BASE budgets, and they need \$5 million for their special education programs. It is not an outrageous request. Yesterday you adopted a revenue estimate of some \$120 million dollars....

### Montana's school children deserve to be our priority

I would respectfully request that you do not use the school funding bill as a pawn in your deliberations around tax policy.

The children in your classrooms don't sit on any particular side of the aisle. They sit in your rural and urban schools; there are some

whose families are wealthy and others that are poor; they come from diverse family backgrounds and occupations, they are all gifted in their own unique way. And, they are all our children.

As we close the chapter on this century, let us set our priorities with our children in mind. Over the years, people have had the opportunity to impact or even change the course of history. I want the history book to report that the need was great, the debate was civil, and that each of you, without hesitation, stepped forward on behalf of Montana's school children. ■

## Globalstage brings the theatre to video

Based in San Francisco, filming in the U.S. and Europe, but with deep roots in Montana, Globalstage provides parents and teachers with an arts-based, alternative to video store rentals that introduce Montana children to the wonders and magic of theatre, literature, and fine art.

### The videos

Globalstage travels the world to find the best family theatre—seeking out productions that spark the imagination and challenge the mind—and puts them on video. The company currently has five titles: *Pinocchio*, *Cyrano*, *Frankenstein*, *Far From The Madding Crowd*, and *Playing From the Heart*. All are plays being staged at well-known theatres and filmed on location. All come with a companion booklet with background material and lesson plan suggestions. Globalstage intends to produce six more videos in 1999 and offers subscriptions to interested individuals or schools.

### Montana connections

Although she now lives in San Francisco, Globalstage founder Libby Pratt still calls Montana home. Pratt graduated from Glasgow High School and returns frequently to visit. One of the Globalstage videos' co-hosts, Pratt's 12-year-old son Preston was born in Livingston and attended public school in Billings and Absarokee. The series's other host, Elizabeth McNamer is a professor at Rocky Mountain College in Billings.

### For more information

For more information about Globalstage, contact Angy Etchart Stchelton (tel: 888-324-5623 x 221; e-mail: [globalstage@aol.com](mailto:globalstage@aol.com)) or visit <http://www.globalstage.net>. ■





"Dispatches" are updates by Office of Public Instruction staff. Staff members may be reached at either the e-mail addresses and phone numbers listed or by writing them at the Office of Public Instruction, PO Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501.

**Curriculum and Assessment**  
Jan Clinard  
444-3714  
jclinard@state.mt.us

## NCTE Northwest Conference

Ivan Doig is slated as one of four keynote speakers for *Big Sky 2000: Finding Your Place in the New Millennium*, an NCTE Northwest Regional Conference to be held April 13-16, 2000, at Big Sky, Montana. With the theme "Sense of Place," this conference promises to be an event of "big" proportions. If you wish to be involved, please call me.

## Joint Committee on K-16 Composition Standards

On December 7, a group of over 20 high school and college composition teachers met at the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) to plan how to improve the transition of students from high school to college regarding composition.

This group was charged with the following tasks:

- to review draft K-12 standards for writing, suggest revisions that would enhance students' transition from high school to college, and make recommendations for their modification prior to public hearings;
- to help OPI and OCHE staff complete collecting information about current practices in college composition placement, including use of Advanced Placement examinations;
- to advise OPI and OCHE on possible strategies to disseminate information to high schools and their students about the tests each of the units of the University System uses to place college freshmen in composition courses and its policies regarding Advanced Placement;
- to examine criteria used for judging writing at high school and college levels and to consider the feasibility of holding a norming session between the two sectors;
- to discuss the utility of current high school transcripts for correctly placing students in composition courses at the college level; and
- to develop proficiency-based admissions standards and graduation requirements for the Montana University System.

Already, much of the work for collecting information about the current practices in placement and advanced placement has been completed. In fact, an AP workshop has been scheduled for March 20 in Bozeman.

For the names of the people on this team or to make suggestions about the direction of this work, please call me.

## MISTA (Montana Improving Schools Through Accreditation)

In October, over 30 new schools participated in a MISTA training facilitated by staff members from the MISTA pilot schools. Many of these MISTA "beginners" have reported that their work of profiling and writing missions and goals is proceeding as planned. Several community meetings have been held.

Spring training is scheduled for March 15 in Missoula, March 16 in Great Falls, and March 18 in Billings. A handful of schools have expressed interest in joining this new group of schools now so that they can be on schedule for the March training.

## Teacher Preparation Standards

Drafts of revised teacher preparation standards for English, Speech Communication, Journalism, and Drama have been sent to selected individuals. These revisions were suggested by writing teams consisting of experts from higher education and K-12 schools. A session was held at the MEA Conference to discuss any changes.

Anyone who has an interest in these standards is welcome to participate in the revision process. Please contact me.

**Educational Technology**  
Michael Hall, Specialist  
444-4422  
mhall@state.mt.us

## Technology Literacy Challenge Fund Grants

The 1998-1999 Technology Literacy Challenge Fund (TLCF) Grants have been awarded. Fifty-three applications were reviewed for the competition, and the successful applicant districts are listed below.

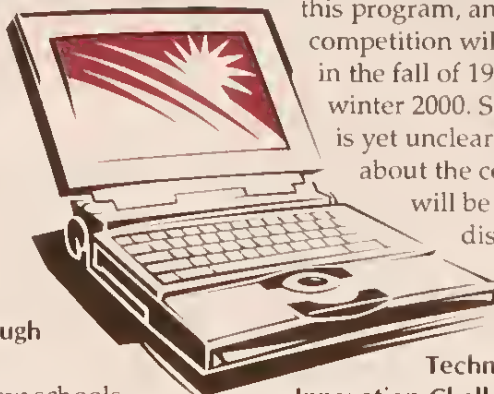
- Alberton Public Schools
- Butte Public Schools
- Centerville Public Schools
- Charlo Public Schools
- Columbus Public Schools
- Frontberg Public Schools
- Glasgow Public Schools
- Monforton Public Schools
- Potomac Public Schools
- Rapelje Public Schools
- Sun River K-8
- Sweet Grass County High School
- Target Range Public Schools
- Terry Public Schools

Districts that applied but did not receive funding for their proposals

will get reviewer comments on their proposals.

## Another possible round of TLCF

If, as expected, Congress approves additional funding for this program, another grant competition will take place in the fall of 1999 or early winter 2000. Since the date is yet unclear, information about the competition will be sent to districts at the appropriate time.



## Technology Innovation Challenge Grants

The U.S. Department of Education is currently accepting Technology Innovation Challenge Grant applications. These competitive grants provide five-year funding for school districts that can be used to implement, evaluate, and document innovative applications of information and computer technologies. For more information, visit the Web site at <<http://www.ed.gov/Technology>> or call 202-208-4042. The current cycle's deadline is March 12, 1999.

## AOL grant program

The America On Line (AOL) Foundation is accepting proposals from teams involving K-12 public schools and other nonprofit educational groups. Teams may involve teachers, administrators, parents, and other community members.

These grants of up to \$7,500 are for the development and implementation of innovative uses of interactive technology to enhance educational outcomes for K-12 students. For more information, view the Web site at <<http://www.aolfoundation.org/>>.

**Homeless, Neglected, and Delinquent Education**  
Terry Teichrow, Specialist  
444-2036  
teichrow@state.mt.us

## Montana Food Bank Network

The Montana Food Bank Network supports local communities by supplying supplemental food to food pantries and on-site feeding programs to help meet their food needs.

the elementary level about the needs of hungry people and how they can, through their donations to the local food pantry, create a meal for a hungry family.

## "Create-A-Meal" kicks off annual Holiday Food Drive in East Helena

On Monday, November 30, 1998, the Montana Food Bank Network Truck rolled up to Radley Elementary School in East Helena to support the kick-off of ASARCO's Holiday Food Drive for Helena Food Share.

Over 400 students from Radley and East Helena schools toured the Network's tractor-trailer truck and learned how they can support Helena Food Share by donating food through the "Create-A-Meal" Program. Teachers received assignment sheets for students to take home so they and their parents could discuss the foods they could donate to Helena Food Share to create a meal for a family. When East Helena's Main Street School learned that the Network truck was coming to town, they asked to have it stop at their school, so that their students could also tour the vehicle and learn about hunger in their community and how they can help.

The Holiday Food Drive is an annual event that ASARCO sponsors through its School Business Partnership Program. Students in grades 4 and 6 at East Helena and Radley Schools participate in collecting food for the Helena Food Share Holiday Drive.

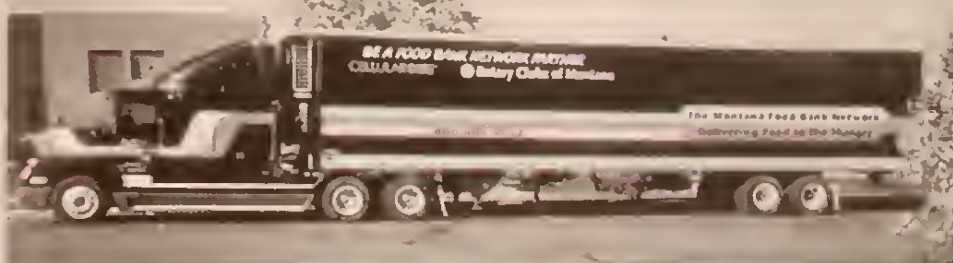
## More information

For more information on how your school can get involved in the "Create-A-Meal" program, contact Peggy Grimes or Juanita Wardell at the Montana Food Bank Network (800-809-4752).

**Traffic Education Programs**  
David C. Huff, Director  
444-4396  
dhuff@state.mt.us

## Legislative Session

There are already several bills affecting traffic educators this session. Probably the most prominent will be the graduated driving license. At the request of a group called Montanans For Safe Driving Through Graduated Licensing,



In November, the Montana Food Bank Network Truck drove into East Helena to introduce over 400 students to the "Create-A-Meal" Program, which is designed to educate elementary students about the needs of hungry people and how they can help.

## "Create-A-Meal" Program

The Montana Food Bank Network has developed its "Create-A-Meal" Program to help educate students at

Representative Kim Gillan (D-Billings) is sponsoring HB 356. It was heard in the House Transportation Committee on February 8th.



At the Montana Traffic Education Association (MTEA) conference last spring, members were surveyed as to their opinion on graduated driving licenses. Most MTEA members supported the graduated driving license concept. Consistent with that, MTEA's president, Dan Purcell, has agreed to be a member of the graduated driver license coalition.

We can also expect a number of bills that address the speed limit. Representative Sam Kitzenberg (R-Glasgow) has introduced the first one, HB 22. A variety of other bills will address issues such as seat belts, passengers in the back of pickups, lockouts for DUI repeat offenders, etc.

You can review bills and their status through the Internet. Go to Montana's home page at <http://www.state.mt.us/> and click on "1999 Legislative Session" (see page 3 for more information on accessing information during the legislative session).

#### 1999 MTEA annual conference

The MTEA board and conference steering committee met December 5 in Lewistown to continue planning for the 1999 conference. The conference will be held at the Billings Holiday Inn on April 25-27, 1999.

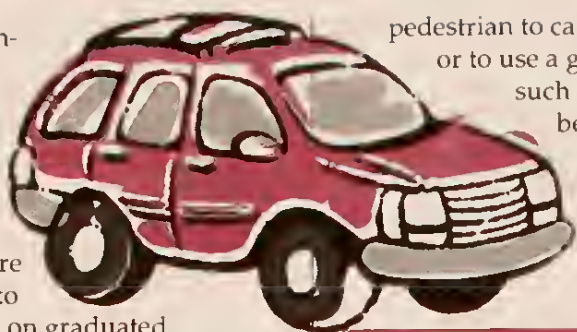
#### White cane laws

Are you including information in your traffic education classes relative to the rights of totally and partially blind persons in traffic? A member of the blind community asked me to remind driver education instructors of the importance of informing new drivers of the laws concerning the blind. I have reprinted the applicable state statute below for your information.

49-4-216 (MCA) Duty and civil liability of pedestrian or driver approaching blind person.

(1) A pedestrian who is not totally or partially blind or a driver of a vehicle who approaches or comes in contact with a person who is totally or partially blind and is carrying a cane or walking stick predominately white or metallic in color or white tipped with red or is being led by a trained guide dog wearing a harness and walking on either side of or slightly in front of such blind person shall immediately come to a full stop and take such precautions before proceeding as may be necessary to avoid accident or injury to such blind person.

(2) A driver or pedestrian who fails to take such precautions is liable in damages for any injury caused the totally or partially blind person. A totally or partially blind pedestrian who is not carrying such a cane or using a guide dog in any of the places listed in 49-4-211 has all of the rights and privileges conferred by law upon other persons, and the failure of such a



pedestrian to carry such a cane or to use a guide dog in any such place may not be held to constitute or be evidence of contributory negligence.

**Science-Mathematics Consortium for Northwest Schools (SMCNWS)**  
Patricia B. Johnson, State Coordinator  
444-2736  
[patjohnson@state.mt.us](mailto:patjohnson@state.mt.us)

The Science and Mathematics Consortium for Northwest Schools (SMCNWS) acts as a catalyst, initiating programs regionally for the states of Montana, Idaho, Alaska, Oregon, and Washington. Those who attend regional events work to continue these programs within the states. One such program is planned for winter of 1999.

#### Support Student Achievement

The Professional Development Conference to Support Student Achievement is designed specifically for school district and organizational teams interested in strengthening their knowledge base and skills in staff development.

Held on February 13-15, 1999, in Seattle, the conference was limited to 300 participants. Participants attended as members of a three to six-person team representing school districts and education-related agencies and organizations in the Northwest. School district teams must include central office staff and a principal.

Sponsors are SMCNWS, the National Staff Development Council, and various educational professional organizations in Montana, Idaho, Alaska, Oregon and Washington, including MCTM. Details of the conference are posted at <http://www.col-ed.org/smcnws/nsdc/>.

#### Making schools work Web site

*Making Schools Work for Every Child* began as a CD-ROM produced by the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse (ENC). The CD was so popular that the initial inventory was quickly depleted. In response, ENC developed a *Making Schools Work for Every Child* Web site at <http://equity.enc.org/>.

Major topics on the site are Stories and Cases, Equity, Community Building, Self-Assessment, and Resource Finder. The introduction to the equity site is quoted in the next paragraph.

"This Web site serves as a resource for educators who are concerned about creating equitable conditions in which every child can succeed at school. It provides a collection of math and science equity materials to help teachers and administrators acknowledge children's diverse strengths, identify inequities, and improve the ways in which we currently serve students with varied needs."

#### More Information

If you would like more informa-

tion on SMCNWS or its programs, please call or send me an e-mail.

**Indian Education**  
Denise Juneau, Specialist  
444-3013  
[djuneau@state.mt.us](mailto:djuneau@state.mt.us)

#### Indian Education Summit

On October 22 and 23, the Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education (MACIE) and the Montana Indian Education Association (MIEA) co-sponsored an Indian Education Summit and Legislative Forum. The summit allowed educators a setting in which they could discuss current challenges in Indian Education and share effective strategies and ideas for solutions.

This activity took place in the House Chambers at the State Capitol. The summit and forum were co-hosted by the OPI Indian Education Specialist and Title I, the American Indian Higher Education Achievement Office with the Commissioner of Higher Education, and the Coordinator of Indian Affairs Office in the Governor's Office.

#### Summit's importance

This summit was very important to Indian people within the state of Montana. It was the beginning of a proactive movement to create positive change for our Indian students. Too often we wait for others to take action for us; however, this was a first step toward defining what education means to us and strategizing ways to incorporate our definitions into the system. It is time for us to find the words to express ourselves and assert our voice in order to create a positive and equitable education system.

This summit was also a first step in empowering ourselves to be active thinkers about our work and to be active participants in creating

solutions to the problems. It is through the sharing of ideas that we can begin to create change. This summit was an opportunity to think through our beliefs, to share ideas, to challenge current practices, to identify professional and personal needs, as well as develop literacy innovations for our Indian students.

#### Summit agenda

The summit began with comments and presentations by Dr. Robert Swan (MIEA Chairperson), Gail Gray (Assistant Superintendent, OPI), Denise Juneau (Indian Education Specialist, OPI), Norma Bixby (MACIE Chairperson), Mike Jetty (Title I, OPI), and Ellen Swaney (Director of American Indian Minority Achievement, OCHE).

Attendees participated in a series of roundtable discussions that focused on the current challenges in Montana Indian Education and finding strategies for addressing those challenges. Friday's roundtable discussions were held on the topics of:

- ✓ Issues in K-12 Public Education
- ✓ Race and Diversity Issues in Educational Systems and Impacts on Indian Education
- ✓ Math/Science/Technology: Can It Help Indian Education?
- ✓ Higher Education and Indians – Recruitment and Retention in the University System
- ✓ How to Strengthen the Power of the Indian School Board Members and Parents in our Public School Systems

MACIE and MIEA members facilitated and participated in these roundtables.

#### Issues discussed at roundtable for K-12 Education

Some of the topics discussed at the K-12 Public Education were:

##### High drop-out rates

Why do Indian students drop out (or are pushed out or shut out) at such high rates? What can we do to decrease this number? We must

## Indian Teacher Network is planned

While students made up 10 percent of Montana's public school population in 1997-98, Indian teachers numbered only 228 of 11,084 — or 2.1 percent — of our state's teaching population. The discrepancy between these numbers shows that it is important to recruit more Indian people into the education profession.

In order to begin this process, the Indian Education Office at OPI would like to create a database of Indian educators presently teaching in the state. This database will eventually lead to the creation of an Indian Teacher Network. If you would like to be a part of this network, please fill out the coupon below and send it to Denise Juneau, Indian Education Specialist at OPI. Please make a copy for your colleagues to fill out as well. Thanks for your time.

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I am an Indian Teacher and am interested in participating in an Indian Teacher Network.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School where I teach: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_



remember that a lack of education leads to the disempowerment of a child. By not being in school, a child's future is limited. This is why we must ensure that students stay in school.

## *Low scores on achievement on standardized tests*

Although we all agree that test scores are low and that it is important for Indian students to perform better on these tests, we should resist the tendency to focus only on increasing student test scores. Higher test scores will not necessarily equal success. Tests are not a measure of everything truly important. If the test scores rise, does that mean that we then have equitable schools? Does it mean that all the problems are solved?

## *Effective pedagogical strategies and relevant curriculum*

Schools must become aware that an Indian student is a unique student within their walls. They must learn that effective practices and high expectations will engage students and stir their intellectual

interests and development so they will succeed in the education system. We must also find ways to incorporate contemporary Indian society into the curriculum, as well as make sure that students understand their history and how that history has affected who they are. We must also ensure that their language is taught and validated in the schools.

## *Community Involvement*

It is important for communities and schools to become involved with one another. Public schools must serve their public. Communities must provide input so that their schools can address their needs. These two entities must work together to ensure that quality education is provided to students.

## *Racism in education*

Although Indians are the majority minority in Montana, our students still face oppression and racism at school. We must seek ways to bridge the differences in races, ethnicities, cultures, philosophies, and ideologies that are inevitable in

our education system. We need to seek ways that will help the people in Montana's education systems move beyond tolerance and into understanding.

## **Emphasize accomplishments**

Throughout all these discussions, we also discovered that many good things are happening in our schools that we must not lose sight of. We must continue to discuss what these positive practices are and encourage each other to take risks in our positions so these positives are disseminated and practiced across the state.

## **Need to build community**

We need to also continue to develop our ideas, beliefs, and personal values as educators and build community among ourselves. There are a number of us all working toward the same goals, but we are working in isolation without much collaboration. There is power

in numbers and we need to remember that we must support each other and learn from each other. This relationship building and learning process was evident at the summit and I believe that this trend will continue until we make our schools a better place for Indian students.

## **Legislative Forum**

Saturday's sessions at the Legislative Forum included discussions on the 1997 Legislative Session and the recommendations of the Indian Affairs Committee for the 1999 session.

A complete report on the 1998 Indian Education Summit and Legislative Forum is being written for distribution to interested groups. A follow-up meeting will also be held during the Montana Indian Education Association (MIEA) Conference in the spring of 1999. I would like to thank everyone who attended the summit for teaching me some things and enlightening me on several issues.



## **MACIE is an important resource for information on Montana Indian education**

Established by Montana's Board of Public Education and the OPI, the Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education (MACIE) acts in an advisory role in matters affecting the education of Indian students in Montana. MACIE strives for greater cooperation among tribal, state and federal organizations, groups and agencies for the purpose of promoting high-quality education and equal opportunity for Indian students served by the elementary and secondary education programs in Montana.

MACIE's membership is representative of Indian Education in the state of Montana. The Tribal Council for each reservation selects a person to represent them, and state organizations who play a role in Indian education are also represented.

The current membership of MACIE is listed below; there are some new faces on the Council this year. If there are issues you would like heard by OPI and MBPE, or if you would like information about Indian Education in the state, these members are there for you to talk to. ■

**Norma Bixby, MACIE Chair**  
Northern Cheyenne Tribe  
PO Box 307 • Lame Deer, MT 59043  
tel: 477-6643 • fax: 477-8150  
norma@mcn.net

**Nora Bird, Montana Assn. for Bilingual Education**  
PO Box 153 • Lodge Grass, MT 59050 • tel: 657-2091  
N\_BIRD@vixen.emcmt.edu

**Tracie Buckless, MEA**  
PO Box 308 • Ronan, MT 59864  
tel: 676-3390 ext 3402  
rntsbuck@ronan.net

**Robert "Smokey" Doore, MSBA**  
Browning Schools • PO Box 610  
Browning, MT 59417 • tel: 338-2715

**Harold Dusty Bull, Blackfeet Tribe**  
PO Box 850 • Browning, MT 59417  
tel: 338-7538

**Levon French, BIA**  
316 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street • Billings, MT 59101 • tel: 247-7953 • fax: 247-7965

**Janice E. Hawley, Fort Belknap Tribes**  
PO Box 333 • Harlem, MT 59526 • tel: 353-3425

**Kevin Howlett, Salish-Kootenai Tribes**  
PO Box 278 • Pablo, MT 59855  
tel: 675-2700 • fax: 675-2014

**Arnold Jefferson, Crow Tribe**  
PO Box 250 • Crow Agency, MT 59022 • tel: 638-7215

**Desi Lambert, Fort Peck Tribes**  
PO Box 1027 • Poplar, MT 59255  
tel: 768-5136 • fax: 768-3556

**Carole Meyers, Urban Programs**  
Missoula Indian Center  
2300 Regent Street, Suite A  
Missoula, MT 59801

**Sandra Murie, Impact Aid**  
Rocky Boy Schools  
RR1 Box 620 • Box Elder, MT 59521  
tel: 395-4291 • murie@hi-line.net

**Joyce Silverthorne, MBPE**  
PO Box 149 • Dixon, MT 59831  
tel: 246-3224 • fax: 246-3224  
dxn3224@montana.com

**Voyd St. Pierre, School Administrators of Montana**  
Rocky Boy Schools  
RR1 Box 620 • Box Elder, MT 59521

**Louise Stump, Chippewa-Cree Tribes**  
Stone Child College  
PO Box 1082 • Box Elder, MT 59521

**Ellen Swaney, Montana Council of American Indian Higher Education**  
OCHE • 2500 Broadway  
Helena, MT 59620 • tel: 444-0332  
eswaney@oche.montana.edu

**Wilhemina Wright, MFT**  
PO Box 165 • Arlee, MT 59821

**Theodora weatherwax, Montana Indian Education Assn.**  
PO Box 1018, Browning, MT 59417  
tel: 338-2569

## **Montana Library Paraprofessional news**

The Montana Library Paraprofessional Association (MLPA) has a new chair! Kathy Birkenbuel, of the Montana Power Company Law Library in Butte, has graciously stepped forward to replace Rita Gibson, who had to resign in November.

## **Montana library education summit**

On October 28, 1998, the Montana State Library hosted a Library Education for Montana summit meeting. Fourteen members of Montana's library and higher education communities gathered to discuss various aspects of future library education for our state. At the summit, Rita Gibson spoke about MLPA's "paraprofessional vision"—

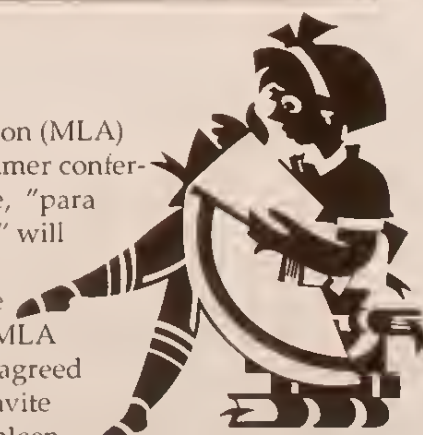
MLPA members' "wish list" for more training to better do their jobs. The summit participants responded favorably to the information Gibson presented.

At that meeting, participants supported pooling available statewide resources to create a two-year Library Technical Assistant program. It was concluded that a Masters degree in Library Science program would not be as practical for Montana. This topic requires further discussion, with a concerted effort to involve members of the community college and vocational/technical school communities.

**"Para day" at the June convention**  
At the Montana Library Asso-

ciation (MLA) summer conference, "para day" will be June 15. MLA has agreed to invite Kathleen Weibel of the Chicago Public Library to present her workshop: "I Work In A Library But I'm Not A Librarian." In addition, a distance education workshop will be offered, and the MPLA business meeting will be held. More information will be passed along as it becomes available. ■

—Rita Gibson, MLPA past president





# Bulletin Board

Listings in the Bulletin Board do not necessarily imply endorsement by the Office of Public Instruction.

## Resources

### Youth Community Service Guide

The Prevention Resource Center of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services has published *A Community Service Guide for Montana's Youth*. This guide includes project ideas, resources, funding sources, and step-by-step instructions for implementing successful service projects.

To receive a free copy of this publication, call 444-9654. A copy of the guide is also available on METNET and on the Prevention Resource Center's Web site <<http://www.mt.gov/prc>>.

### Emergency management Web site

The State Disaster and Emergency Services now has a Web site available at <<http://www.state.mt.us/dma/des>>. The site offers a wide range of information on training, current situation reports, and other links to the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

## Teacher Scholarship

### 1999 Rainforest Workshop drawing

Teachers interested in attending a summer workshop in the rainforest should call 800-669-6806 or send an e-mail message to [fgatz@earthlink.net](mailto:fgatz@earthlink.net) by March 1, 1999, to enter a \$1,000 scholarship drawing. There are no entry requirements.

Rainforest workshops engage teachers in research with ornithologists, marine biologists, canopy researchers, geographers, and biodiversity experts. Participants can earn graduate credit.

More information is available at the contact information above. And, coming soon the Rainforest Workshops will have an interactive Web site at <<http://www.travel2learn.com>>.

## Calling All 4th and 5th Grade Teachers

The Montana Historical Society (MHS) is looking for "a few good curricula."

Inspired by projects at other historical societies and museums, the MHS would like to assemble a collection of successfully tested lesson plans and curricula on teaching our state's history to fourth and fifth graders. The envisioned booklet would contain a series of thematic lessons that could be taught in one week or less and together equal a five to six-week unit.

The curriculum-packet lessons will serve as a building block for the essential skill and information that elementary students need to have to progress to studying Montana history in middle school. The booklet will be published and available for sale to all Montana teachers.

The MHS's Teacher Advisory Panel, in addition to the Society's Education Officer, Research Historian, Press Editor, and Publications Director will review the submissions and select the best entries for publication. Submit your lessons and curriculum to Kristin Gallas, Education Officer, MHS, PO Box 201201, Helena, MT 59620-1201 (fax: 444-2696). You can call (444-2696) if you have any questions.

Submissions deadline is March 1, 1999.

## World AIDS Day Kudos

The Office of Public Instruction (OPI) selected several people to receive the Governor's Award in December 1998. The teachers and students honored by OPI provide exemplary work in the area of HIV prevention and AIDS education to schools and students throughout Montana.

Barry Linn, a Laurel educator, was instrumental in developing the events and presentations for last year's AIDS Awareness Week at Laurel High School. Barry and the AIDS Peer Advocates at the school provided a week of daily activities and learning opportunities for Laurel High School students along with an evening schedule with the same emphasis for community participation.

Alice Bengeyfield, a fifth grade teacher in Dillon, has been involved as a Regional Trainer of HIV/AIDS workshops for OPI for the past nine years. In addition, Bengeyfield has also been providing teacher training opportunities to students at MSU-Dillon and provides prevention efforts for Dillon's two school districts.

Connie Wittak, a Family and Consumer Science Teacher at Scobey High School, is also a

Regional AIDS Trainer for OPI. During her nine years of involvement, Wittak has conducted numerous local and regional workshops and actively engaged students, parents, teachers and other administrators in HIV/AIDS awareness activities and worked hard to implement HIV/AIDS/STD education consistent with the philosophy of the Health Enhancement Accreditation Standards into the school curriculum.

Tawna Jackson, Davy Feller and Tina Huller, three high school students from Bridger, Montana, worked to involve their FHA/HERO Chapter in the AIDS Quilt Project. This project helped raise student involvement and community awareness of HIV prevention and AIDS education issues.

Benette Bernhardt, Melissa Plath, and Leslie Erickson, members of the Billings-area group SHOUT

# CALENDAR

## February

19-22: American Association of School Administrators (AASA), New Orleans, LA—Julie Sykes, 442-2510  
22-Mar 2: National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), New Orleans, LA—Julie Sykes, 442-2510  
25-27: Montana Aviation Conference, Butte—Debbie Alke, 444-2506

## March

4-5: Board of Public Education, 2500 Broadway, Helena—Heidi Redman, 444-0302 x 6576  
4-6: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), Great Falls—Dick Seitz, fax: 447-8836  
7-9: DECA-Association for Marketing Students, Missoula—Barb Robertson, 442-6952  
14-17: Business Professionals of America (BPOA), Billings—OPI, 444-3000  
17-19: Montana Association of School Superintendents (MASS), Helena—Julie Sykes, 442-2510  
19-20: *Developing Self Management and Discipline Skills in Youth*, a Jerry Conrath Workshop, Radisson Northern Hotel, Billings—Ron Lukenbill, OPI, 444-2080 or [rlukenbill@state.mt.us](mailto:rlukenbill@state.mt.us)  
20-23: National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), San Francisco, CA—Julie Sykes, 442-2510  
24-26: Montana Association of County School Superintendents (MACSS), Helena—Julie Sykes, 442-2510  
25-28: National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), Boston—Kevin Bullock, 703-312-9288  
28-30: Future Homemakers of America (FHA/HERO), Billings—Laurie Stelter, OPI, 444-2059

## April

7-10: Future Farmers of America (FFA), Billings—David Hall, OPI, 444-4451  
7-10: National Congress on Aviation and Space Education, Orlando, FL, Ben Millsbaugh, 719-556-6656  
8-9: Board of Public Education, Helena—Heidi Redman, 444-0302 x 6576  
12-14: Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA), Havre—David Strong, 444-4452

13-16: National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), Big Sky—Jan Clinard, OPI, 444-3714

15-17: Association for Gifted and Talented Education, Butte—Ruth Carlstrom, 791-2330

16-17: *Developing Self-Management and Discipline Skills in Youth*, a Jerry Conrath Workshop, Holiday Inn Express, Missoula—Ron Lukenbill, OPI, 444-2080 or [rlukenbill@state.mt.us](mailto:rlukenbill@state.mt.us)

17: Aspiring Principals Conference, MSU-Bozeman Campus—Nonnie Hughes, Morning Star School Principal, 585-1580

21-23: Montana Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP), Bozeman—Julie Sykes, 442-2510

21-23: Montana Association of Family and Consumer Sciences & Montana Dietetics Association, Great Falls—Rosemary Neilsen, fax: 791-2138 or [rosemary\\_neilsen@gfps.k12.mt.us](mailto:rosemary_neilsen@gfps.k12.mt.us)

22-23: Child Witnesses and Juvenile Perpetrators: Addressing the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence, Spokane, WA—Spokane County Domestic Violence Consortium 509-487-6783

22-24: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), San Francisco, CA—NCTM 800-235-7566

25-27: Montana Traffic Education Association (MTEA), Billings—Jim Carroll, 278-3285

## May

2-7: International Reading Association, San Diego, CA—June Atkins, OPI, 444-3664

4-5: Certification Standards & Practices Advisory Council (CSPAC), MSU-Billings Campus—Cindy DeTienne, 444-6576

13-14: Board of Public Education, Helena—Heidi Redman, 444-0302 x 6576

## June

13-16: Montana Library Association & Mountain Plains Library Association Conference, Big Sky—Alice Meister, Bozeman Public Library, [ameister@mtlib.org](mailto:ameister@mtlib.org)

13-18: Montana Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, Bozeman—David Hall, OPI, 444-4451

16-18: Montana Association of Pupil Transportation, Daly Elementary School, Hamilton—Linda Michel, 452-0082

AIDS (Students Helping Others Understand Teen AIDS), were recognized for their efforts. The SHOUT AIDS mission is to educate their peers on issues relating to HIV/AIDS, decision-making skills, communication skill development, sexuality issues, putting a face to HIV, and accepting responsibility for actions.

The Montana Council of Teachers of Mathematics (MCTM) received recognition for the work of the Systemic Initiative for Montana Mathematics and Science (SIMMS) Project in designing and defending

the mathematics module *AIDS: The Preventable Epidemic*, which is used in the ninth grade.

The module is strictly mathematical and uses Centers of Disease Control data and language about the spread of disease, looking at the statistics and the probabilities involved in infection. One of the goals of the SIMMS curriculum is to help students use mathematics to make better decisions.

The module has been used by high schools all over the state for the past six years and is currently being piloted in a number of sites across the country. ■

This document printed at government expense. 14,000 copies were produced and distributed to schools, educational organizations, and other interested individuals at an estimated cost of 19¢ per copy.